IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please add the following new paragraph on page 1 prior to BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION:

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a Continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 10/331,562, filed December 30, 2002, which is a Continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/702,777, filed November 1, 2000. The entire disclosures of prior applications Serial No. 10/331,562, filed December 30, 2002, and Serial No. 09/702,777, filed November 1, 2000, are considered to be part of the disclosure of this application and are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entirety.

Please amend page 7, lines 19-27 as follows:

The fire-retardant cellulose polymer, in its solid form, has a varying solubility in water that is related to its molecular length and the degree of cross linking. The cellulose-based fire retardant composition may be insoluble in water. The degree of cross linking and average molecular length may be varied by the temperature used in the reaction process. In an embodiment according to the present invention, the temperature of the cellulosic solution is increased to about 100°C so that the solution begins to boil. As the temperature of the solution is increased, the chain length shortens.